

CLAIMS:

1. A method of regulating sharing of a multimedia object by a device, comprising registering usage information for the multimedia object upon sharing of the multimedia object, and after the registering, billing a user of the device for a certain amount in accordance with the registered usage information for the multimedia object.

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2. The method of claim 1, further comprising recording user profile information for the user, and crediting the bill with a sum upon receipt of the recorded user profile information together with the registered usage information.

10 3. A device arranged for sharing of a multimedia object, comprising file sharing means for sharing the multimedia object with other devices, identifying means for obtaining an identifier for the multimedia object being shared, accounting means for registering usage information for the identified multimedia object, reporting means for, when the recorded data meets a predetermined criterion, transmitting the registered usage information to a third party
15 to allow afterwards billing for sharing of the multimedia object in accordance with the registered usage information for the multimedia object.

4. The device of claim 3, in which the identifying means are arranged to obtain the identifier from metadata associated with the multimedia object.

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5. The device of claim 4, in which the identifying means comprise a watermark detector arranged to detect a watermark in the multimedia object and to extract the identifier from the metadata encoded using the watermark.

25 6. The device of claim 3, in which the identifying means comprise a fingerprint calculator arranged to obtain the identifier by computing a fingerprint for at least a portion of the multimedia object.

7. The device of claim 3, in which the usage information being registered for the multimedia object comprises a number of times the multimedia object is being shared.

8. The device of claim 3, in which the usage information being registered for the multimedia object comprises an indication of a length of the multimedia object.

9. The device of claim 3, in which the predetermined criterion comprises a predetermined number of times the multimedia object has been shared.

10 10. The device of claim 3, being arranged to inhibit sharing of the multimedia object in response to the reporting means failing to transmit the recorded data to the third party.

11. The device of claim 3, further comprising user profile maintenance means for maintaining a user profile, the reporting means being arranged to additionally transmit at least a portion of the user profile to the third party.

12. A computer program product being arranged to cause a general purpose computer to operate as the device of claim 3.